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STATEMENT BY GOVERNOR THURMOND AT McCORMICK
CAMPAIGN MEETING MAY 24, 11 A.M.

I want to discuss with you today something that has been done by the man my opponent supported for President which I think is just as reprehensible as his FEPC program.

Early in 1949 the President called on the armed services to abandon their traditional policy against segregation. A commission was set up to bring this about.

I have before me here an order by Secretary of Defense Louis Johnson putting into operation the President's command to abandon segregation in the armed forces.

The purpose of this order was to abolish all negro units and mix colored personnel into the white units.

On Monday of this week, the man my opponent helped elect President sent to the Congress a report bragging on the fact that segregation had been brought to an end in the armed forces. The report boasted that the all negro 332d fighter wing and its flying personnel had been intergrated into white squadrons, that negroes are serving on battleships along with white sailors and that they are serving side by side in the army.

The policy of having separate white and negro units which helped the United States win two world wars has been sacrificed on the altar of politics. I tell you when the commander in chief of our armed forces plays politics with national defense we have reached a sad day in America.

This means that if we have another war and our white — boys and girls are drafted they will be forced to serve in units with negroes, they will be forced to sleep in the same barracks, eat in the same mess halls, use the same recreational facilities, and in some cases serve under negro officers.

I tell you this is a bad policy and some of our boys will not stand for it.

Now what I want you to remember is this -- my opponent was in the Senate when all this was going on. He did not even open his mouth in protest. This was when he was running back to Washington trying to get in the good graces of Harry Truman after Truman had been elected.

As Governor and commander of the South Carolina National Guard I protested to Louis Johnson and we are maintaining our segregation policy in the national guard in this State. If I had been in the Senate you would have heard from me when that order came down and never would I have remained silent.

I would have taken my stand with General Omar Bradley, and General Dwight Eisenhower, and General George Marshall and I would have opposed this move to break down segregation and done something about it. But not your junior Senator. He remained as silent as the tomb.

I believe the people of South Carolina want men in public office who stand for something and who are willing to fight for what they believe in. That is why I am running for the United States Senate.